



Graduate Admissions Guide for International Students

Florida Gulf Coast University

Office of Graduate Admissions
Howard Hall (2nd floor)
10501 FGCU Blvd. S.
Fort Myers, FL 33965
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239-745-GRAD (4723)

*Florida Gulf Coast University is accredited by the
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)
1866 Southern Lane
Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097
Telephone number 404-679-4501
to award Associate, Baccalaureate, Master's, and Doctoral degrees.*

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Graduate Admissions Information

The term international student refers to any student who is not a permanent resident or naturalized citizen of the United States.

The graduate admissions process begins with the Office of Graduate Admissions. This office provides prospective international students with information on academic programs and services. Admission to a graduate program is decided by the program coordinator of the department offering the degree. Graduate Admissions also works with the department of Global Initiatives and International Services to issue the I-20 form used to apply for the F-1 student visa.

International students are not permitted to enroll as Post-Baccalaureate Non-Degree seeking (including certificate programs) unless they are residing in the USA under OPT (Optional Practical Training) status.

FGCU international student admissibility is based on:

1. Academic admissibility
2. Financial support/documentation
3. Visa and U.S. Immigration requirements

If you currently have a visa other than an F-1 visa, you should consult the Office of Graduate Admissions to discuss your immigration status. Each visa category has guidelines that determine how the visa holder can enroll at the University. Prospective students who have visas, passports, or other immigration documents that have expired may need to have those updated prior to their application for an F-1 visa. *Florida Gulf Coast University does not provide legal advice on immigration matters. Unfortunately, prospective students who are determined to be “out of status” with immigration cannot be admitted to the university.*

After your admission is secured at FGCU, the **Office of Global Initiatives and International Services** can assist you with providing support services specifically designed for international students. These services include international orientation to the University, information on living and studying in the U.S., assistance with cross-cultural adjustment and transition issues, information and assistance with U.S. Immigration documents and regulations, as well as campus employment and other services.

Steps for International Graduate Student Enrollment

For admission to FGCU, you will need to:

1. Apply for admission at apply.fgcu.edu
2. Submit the \$30 application fee
3. Submit official academic transcripts – If your Bachelor’s Degree was earned outside of the United States, you must send official transcripts, proof of degree, and if applicable, certification of graduation.
 - All transcripts and proof of degree must be in English; International applicants must submit official original language transcripts and an English translation directly from the non-U.S. institution. Documents signed by notary or other public officials with no affiliation to the educational institution issuing the documents will not be accepted.

- The university reserves the right to request transcripts evaluated by one of the NACES approved credential agencies if determined by the Office of Graduate Admissions and/or individual programs.
4. Submit official entrance exam scores (GMAT, GRE or MAT depending on program).
 5. Applicants must demonstrate full English proficiency in accordance with University policy and will be required to submit acceptable TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or IELTS (International English Language Testing System) scores unless the country of origin uses English as the official language. A minimum score of 79 on the internet based TOEFL, 213 is required on the computerized TOEFL, and 550 on the paper based TOEFL is required. A minimum score of 6.5 is required for the IELTS. With the approval of the appropriate college Dean, applicants may provide satisfactory evidence of English competency in lieu of the TOEFL or IELTS. Examples of satisfactory evidence include, but are not limited to, completion of English Composition I and II (ENC 1101 and ENC 1102, or equivalent) with a grade of C or higher; and/or a minimum of 60 credits satisfactorily completed at an accredited institution of higher education where all courses are taught in English.
 6. Submit a Financial Support Statement. See specific guidelines on pages 11 and 12 of this document.
 7. If you are transferring from a U.S. college or university or progressing from an undergraduate to a graduate program within the U.S., you must provide a visa clearance form authorized by the appropriate officials at your current institution. For more information, please refer to:
https://www.fgcu.edu/admissionsandaid/graduateadmissions/files/Visa_Clearance_form_PDF.PDF.
 8. Submit copies of any and all immigration documents you currently have (copy of passport, Visa, I-94 form, etc.).

Important Note:

Once you have been academically admitted to FGCU and fulfilled the immigration requirements, you will be mailed an I-20 form from the Office of Graduate Admissions. You will need to take this document to a U.S. Embassy or Consulate Office to apply for the F-1 student visa. In your acceptance packet, you will receive information regarding the mandatory University orientation dates along with health insurance and immunization requirements for international students.

Additional Information:

- Provide appropriate immunization information to Student Health Services 239-590-7966
<http://www.fgcu.edu/studenthealth/immunizations.html>
Additionally, you must provide appropriate insurance information that meets the State of Florida requirements.
- Apply for on-campus housing if you wish to live on campus. For more housing information, refer to: <http://www.fgcu.edu/Housing>

International Student Deadlines

Completed applications and ALL materials must be received by the following deadlines:

Deadline for Fall Semester	July 1
Deadline for Spring Semester	November 1

Summer admission is not permitted for International Graduate Students at FGCU.

Level of Placement & Transfer of Academic Credits Taken Abroad

If you are interested in transferring credits to Florida Gulf Coast University, all foreign transcripts must be **evaluated** for equivalency purposes on a **course-by course** basis. University-level coursework taken abroad may be transferable if earned at a recognized institution depending on academic equivalency. International students who have completed some university level education and are interested in transferring academic credit to Florida Gulf Coast University should submit an original evaluation of courses taken and an English translation of course syllabi for which credit is desired. Undergraduate students are placed at the appropriate level for their educational background. However, academic departments have the option of denying credit for any coursework not applicable to that department.

Please be sure to request that your selected evaluation agency mail your official **course-by-course** international evaluation directly to the Office of Graduate Admissions. If you would like to submit your evaluation in person, **ensure that it remains sealed in its original envelope.**

International Transcript Evaluation Contact Information

WES - World Education Services

(305) 358-6688

info@wes.org <http://www.wes.org/>

Josef Silny & Associates

(305) 273-1616 (Miami) info@jsilny.com

<http://www.jsilny.com/>

For a complete list of all acceptable transcript evaluation agencies, please visit:

<http://www.naces.org/members>

Academic Calendar

Florida Gulf Coast University operates on a semester basis. Fall semester begins in late August and ends in mid-December. Spring semester begins in early January and ends in late April or early May. There are three summer sessions; two that begin in May and one that begins in June. Summer sessions condense an intensive level of academic study into a short time period. To view the academic calendar and catalog online, please visit <http://www.fgcu.edu/Registrar/academiccalendar.asp>

Some graduate programs admit students during specified terms only (Fall or Spring only). Degree program requirements, immigration regulations, and other factors may determine a specified term of enrollment.

Enrollment Term

FGCU strongly advises that international students who are enrolling begin enrollment in either the Fall or Spring semester. Beginning during Fall or Spring offers a better opportunity to become familiar with the university, the pace of academic study, and the ability to maintain the appropriate course sequence

required for the degree. Some programs admit students during specified terms only. Degree program requirements, immigration regulations and other factors may determine a student's enrollment term.

Course Credits

Students may enroll for a particular number of semester hours or credits. Most courses earn three or four credits. A course that earns three credits means that a student will generally attend that class for three hours each week. **All international students are required to be enrolled full time (9 hours or more for graduate students) during the Fall and Spring semesters.** A minimum of six (6) credits must be in-person (NOT online) classes; only 3 online credits may be counted toward the 9-credit total. Summer semester is OPTIONAL (no class requirements) for most continuing students. Graduate degrees vary in the number of hours required according to the individual program.

Financial Responsibility

For I-20 purposes, international students are required by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to show adequate proof of their ability to financially support themselves (and any dependents) for the duration of their studies in the United States. International students are generally not permitted to be employed (except for on-campus work) while studying in the United States, and therefore need to ensure full financial support for their education. All applicants must submit proof of financial resources in U.S. Dollars equivalent to the cost of attending Florida Gulf Coast University for one academic year (refer to the Estimated Expenses information on page 8). The **Financial Statement Form** must be completed and signed by an official of your financial institution (such as a bank) where your funds are deposited, or by a sponsor who will be legally responsible for your financial support. **The Financial Statement form must be submitted in its original form. Photocopies are not acceptable. This document should be dated no more than six months prior to the intended date of enrollment.**

Scholarships and Financial Aid

International students are **not** eligible for Florida State or U.S. Federal Financial Aid. However, international students may apply for other scholarships through the Scholarship Office (see page 8) or explore scholarship opportunities on the Office of Research and Graduate Studies website: <http://www.fgcu.edu/Graduate/Financing-graduate-studies.html>. International Students from certain countries may apply for partial tuition exemptions through Florida's State University System's Linkage program. Information on these tuition waivers is available through the Office of Global Initiatives and International Services. You may contact their department by phone at (239) 590-7925, by email at InternationalServices@Fgcu.edu, and on the web at <http://www.fgcu.edu/international/>.

International students may also want to seek scholarships and other forms of financial support from home country governments, employers, family and foundations associated with the student's selected field of study.

Transfer Students

All transfer students must submit a visa/SEVIS clearance form. You are considered to be a "transfer student" if:

1. You are currently enrolled in another U.S. higher education academic institution
2. You are moving from undergraduate to graduate level at FGCU
3. You are seeking a second degree at FGCU

To transfer to FGCU, you should have been pursuing a full course of study (12 undergraduate semester hours or 9 graduate semester hours) in your former program or be on authorized practical training. Otherwise, you may be “Out Of Status” and must apply to the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS) for reinstatement to F-1 status which, if granted, will allow you to request enrollment at FGCU as F-1 status.

[Visa Clearance Form Information](#)

You will need a **Visa Clearance Form** to verify your Visa status if you are a transfer student currently attending a U.S. high school, college or university. This form must be signed by the Designated School Official (DSO) at your current institution and should be sent in a sealed envelope directly to the Office of Graduate Admissions at FGCU. You may use the form at the end of this Guide or you may download the form at:

[https://www.fgcu.edu/admissionsandaid/graduateadmissions/files/Visa Clearance form PDF.P DF.](https://www.fgcu.edu/admissionsandaid/graduateadmissions/files/Visa%20Clearance%20form%20PDF.PDF)

[Medical Insurance](#)

International students are required to carry a personal health insurance program that meets the requirements of the State of Florida. **Proof of medical insurance is not needed for admission purposes, but must be provided to the university prior to registration for classes.** Information on an approved health insurance program can be obtained from the FGCU Global Initiatives and International Service Office. Students who currently have a medical insurance policy must demonstrate to Florida Gulf Coast University that the policy meets the requirements of the State of Florida.

[Housing and Transportation](#)

International students are encouraged to consider living on campus. Living on campus promotes the student's involvement in both the academic and social communities of the university. For more information on living on campus, please visit Housing and Residence Life at <http://www.fgcu.edu/Housing> or contact the office at (239) 590-1700 or by email at housing@fgcu.edu. International students may also arrange their own accommodations in area apartments, with relatives or with a U.S. sponsor. A sponsor who hosts an international student should sign the Financial Support Statement from Sponsor Form to verify that they are providing the room and board as a form of financial support to the student.

Students living off campus will need to provide their own transportation to the FGCU campus. Public transportation is available. International students who plan to drive their own automobiles are responsible for meeting all driver's license, registration, and insurance requirements for the State of Florida.

[Important Contact Information](#)

Office of Graduate Admissions

(239) 745-4723

graduate@fgcu.edu

<https://www.fgcu.edu/admissionsandaid/graduateadmissions/>

FGCU Testing Services

(239) 590-7955

<http://studentservices.fgcu.edu/Testing/>

Enrollment Services Center

(239) 590-7920

FASO@fgcu.edu

<http://www.fgcu.edu/AS/FinancialAid/>

<https://www.fgcu.edu/admissionsandaid/financialaid/undergraduate/typesofaid/scholarships.aspx#InternationalStudentsScholarships>

University Foundation Scholarship Information

(239) 590-1067

<http://www.fgcu.edu/Foundation/scholarships.asp>





Estimated Expenses for International Students 2020-2021

A certificate of eligibility (I-20) will not be issued until proof of sufficient funds is verified by the student's financial institution and/or sponsor.

Note: It is estimated that expenses will increase 10% each academic year.

Estimated Expenses for 2020-2021	Graduate Programs (Master & Doctoral)
Medical Insurance	3,320
Books and Supplies	1,200
Tuition and Fees	23,623
Personal Expenses	1,700
Transportation	1,700
Housing and meals (Room and Board)	9,672
TOTAL (U.S. Dollars)	\$41,215**

**** Graduate International students are required to maintain a full academic course load each semester (9 graduate semester hours). Estimated expenses are based on yearly-required course loads.**

Additional funds are required for any dependents that accompany you. For a nine 9-month period, the U.S. requires \$6,000 for each dependent. For a twelve 12-month period, the U.S. requires \$9,000 for each dependent.



Financial Support Verification Letter from the Bank

INSTRUCTIONS:

Please refer to the **Estimated Expenses for International Students** form for exact costs based on **graduate**, undergraduate and sponsor factors. Please note **ALL FIGURES MUST BE IN U.S. DOLLARS** - foreign currency figures **ARE NOT** acceptable. Or a **Financial Support Verification Letter** can be submitted. It **must be an original document on the bank or financial firm's letterhead**. *This document should be dated no more than six months prior to the intended date of enrollment.*

The Financial Support Verification letter *must* include the following: (please use this as a guide):

Date: (Day/Month/Year)

Re: Sponsoring (name of student to attend Florida Gulf Coast University)

To: Florida Gulf Coast University
Office of Graduate Admissions
Howard Hall, 2nd Floor
10501 FGCU Boulevard South
Fort Myers, FL 33965-6565

I/We certify that (**Name of account holder**) currently has a minimum of \$ U.S. Dollars (**total amount of funds required for you to attend the university for one year**) in an account with our firm, to be applied to educational expenses for (**Name of student**) to attend Florida Gulf Coast University beginning (**date or term you intend to enroll**).

Sincerely,

(Signature of bank/financial officer)
(Print name of bank/financial officer)
(Address and telephone number)



Financial Support Statement from Sponsor

INSTRUCTIONS:

Please refer to the **Estimated Expenses for International Students** form for exact costs based on **graduate**, undergraduate, and sponsor factors. Be certain to enter the correct amount in the spaces provided. **All figures MUST be in U.S. currency (dollars).** Foreign currency figures **ARE NOT** acceptable. *This document should be dated no more than six months prior to the intended date of enrollment, and should include a copy of a bank statement to verify funds.*

The **Financial Support Statement from Sponsor** must include the following:

Date: (Day/Month/Year)

Re: Sponsoring: _____ (name of student to attend Florida Gulf Coast University)

**To: Florida Gulf Coast University
Office of Graduate Admissions
Howard Hall, 2nd Floor
10501 FGCU Boulevard South
Fort Myers, FL 33965-6565**

I / We certify that: *(please complete all that apply)*

I / We will financially support _____ (name of student) for the minimum amount of \$U.S. _____ to attend Florida Gulf Coast University, beginning _____ (date you plan to begin classes).

I / We will provide room and board to _____ (name of student) for the equivalent minimum amount of \$U.S. _____ while attending Florida Gulf Coast University, beginning _____ (date you plan to begin classes).

Sincerely,

(Signature of sponsor)

(Print name of sponsor)

(Sponsor's Address and telephone number)

FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY
International Student Visa Clearance/Transfer Form

To be completed by international students transferring from U.S. high schools, colleges or universities to FGCU.

As a part of the application process to Florida Gulf Coast University, you must show that you are currently in legal status according to USCIS (U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services) regulations. To verify your status, you must:

Step 1: Complete Section I of this form first

Step 2: Your international advisor at your current/previous school **must complete Section II**

Step 3: Your international advisor must mail or fax the completed form to FGCU's Office of Undergraduate Admissions.

IMPORTANT: We cannot issue your I-20 for transfer until your release date (the day you will complete your attendance at your current institution), and without receipt of this completed Visa Clearance/Transfer Form verifying that you are in status.

Issuing your I-20 after the release date may take several weeks. Please allow ample time.

Section I – TO BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT

I request and authorize my present international student advisor (or equivalent campus officer) to provide the information below as part of my application for admission to Florida Gulf Coast University.

Signature	Date	U.S. Social Security # <small>(leave blank if you do not have one)</small>	Expected FGCU Entry Date
Student's Name <small>(As it appears in passport) Last Name/Family Name/Surname/Given Name</small>		Country of Citizenship	
Present Address			
Street and Apartment Number	City and State	Zip Code	Phone Number

Section II - TO BE COMPLETED BY THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADVISOR:

Student's I-94 Admission Number: _____ Expiration date _____ or D/S _____

Date of last entry into the United States: _____

Student's SEVIS ID Number: _____ SEVIS Release Date: _____

Last term student was enrolled full time at your institution _____ Specify Campus/Branch _____
(If university has multiple campuses)

To the best of your knowledge, is/was this student in status as an F-1 Student and eligible for notification of transfer?

Yes **No** **If not, please explain:** _____

Has the student ever been granted any kind of practical training? **Yes** **No**

If so, please identify kind and duration

Signature of School Official (or DSO) Date Printed Name/Title

Name of Institution Address/ City/State/Zip Code Telephone Number

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